

## TEA 2010 participants

**Inga Lande**, Ziemeļvalstu ģimnazija (TEA 2010 Fellow)



I was lucky to be nominated for the participation in the TEA Program (*Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program*). The program started with the Orientation meeting in Washington D.C. where 89 teachers from all over the world came together. Next, we split up and traveled to four universities in Florida, California, Georgia and Nebraska.

I spent six weeks at the College of Education, Georgia State University, Atlanta. Since this was my first time in the USA, I found everything most interesting and valuable to explore. Georgia State University professors contributed a lot to the success of the program; two weeks spent at schools gave quite a clear picture of what the education system of Georgia is like; and the fact that we were 19 teachers from 9 countries made our exchange of experiences into colorful multi-cultural events; such world-famous sights of Atlanta as Martin Luther King Jr. Center, CNN Center, Coca Cola Museum, Georgia Aquarium, Philips Arena, etc. were excellent addition to the program. The final conference in March took place at University of Nebraska, Lincoln.



I would really suggest sparing some time to filling out the TEA Program application form. It is worth the effort. If you are professionally knowledgeable, active and devoted to teaching, I am sure you will benefit from the program and the program participants will benefit from your expertise and experience as well. The length of the program is ideal to be able to get acquainted with American way of life, education and culture.

**Marina Grecanina**, Riga Secondary School Nr. 32, (TEA 2010 Fellow)



I am really glad I took part in TEA program for many reasons. First and foremost, it gave me the opportunity to get new teaching skills, to improve my IT skills (which I was not very good at) and to learn how to use technologies as a teaching tool. Secondly, the program allowed me to develop expertise in Secondary Education teaching EFL and apply it in internship at Freedom High School, Tampa, Florida.

Not only I improved my English skills and practiced American English in real life situations, but was able to learn about the culture and the people of the country, as well as developed my leadership skills, which could be useful for my future career.



All in all, it was invaluable experience to participate in many educational, developing, entertaining activities and events, like USF Children's Festival, Hillsborough Youth Collaborative, cutting-edge courses and many others. In general I can say that there was very good balance between academic work - lectures, seminars, internship on the one hand, and learning about the culture and people-socializing while watching basketball and baseball, investigating history and science in museums, visiting places of interest and attraction, going on field trips and to theatre and music performances on the other hand.

I would recommend TEA to all teachers, who are not afraid of leaving their "nest" for 7 weeks, those, who are striving for the best, those, who would like to change and improve themselves and, obviously, the surrounding environment. My advice could sound like this - "Be open-minded, creative, and optimistic and have brave intentions! It's so good when all voices are heard this is your chance to be heard! Cross the ocean and be active!"



**Biruta Pjalkovska**, Gulbene State gymnasium, (TEA 2010 Fellow)



It was my great pleasure to participate in TEA launched for the first time in Latvia because of several reasons. First of all globalization – it is not only the concept we can read about. It is the real process and we all are involved in it even we don't want to be involved. For me as a teacher and as a human being is very important to get to know as much opinions as possible. TEA program provides a unique opportunity to meet people from all around the world, to meet professors from different universities, to discuss wide circle of questions and enrich knowledge about complicate processes in the world and society.

For me as a Maths teacher it was fantastic opportunity to get to know different ways of teaching it in different countries, to think about different concepts and compare my teaching style with others. But the most interesting thing was teaching in American school and to have discussions with American students.

After this program we continue our contacts made in our group, we go on with our discussions and ideas about co-operation and we have great emotional link between us and more understanding attitude to many events in this world. We are able to bring this attitude in our classrooms as well, we can talk to our students and make this world as a better place.





For new participants I would like to say- don't hesitate and apply! You will be very welcome from the organizers! Be brave! Nobody is perfect, and this program is not for perfect people. This program is for sincere and positive people who want to improve their knowledge.

You will be able to plan your work at school and these 7 weeks will full you with new emotions and energy to do everything in the best way after coming back. You will get invaluable experience and many, many friends and it is worth to step out of your comfort zone and take a little bit of risk and new

adventures.

**Vaira Vira**, Vaidava Elementary School, (TEA 2010 Fellow)



I was very happy to be chosen as a participant of TEA program. All teachers who take part in the program have the possibility to enjoy American hospitality, learn more about American education system and experience it themselves by working in the classroom. I understood that in American classroom democracy is also responsibility and now I share this experience with my colleagues and students.

Another interesting experience is international group. We all got so much information about education and lifestyle not only in America, but in many other countries of the world.

Be ready to share a room for 6 weeks with a representative from another country! By the way, it could be quite challenging!

You will have a wonderful possibility to improve your English skills and learn many interesting teaching methods!